Parmenides

(Or On Ideas: Logical)[1]

The Persons of the Dialogue:

Cephalus, Adeimantus, Antiphon, Glaucon, Pythodorus
Socrates, Zeno, Parmenides, Aristotle

126a When we came to Athens from our home, from Clazomenae,[2] we chanced upon both Adeimantus and Glaucon in the market. And Adeimantus took me by the hand and said, "Welcome Cephalus! If you need anything here that's in our power, just say it."[3]

"Well, in fact," I replied, "I am here for this very thing: I need to ask you for something."

"Please tell us what you need," he said.

b And I answered, "Your half-brother by your mother — what was his name? I can't remember. For surely he was just a boy, when I came from Clazomenae to stay here before. And it's been a long time since

[1] See Diogenes Laertius' *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, III.57 and III.49 ff. about the notes that begin each Platonic dialogue and tell us something about their content and classification. The *Parmenides* is the only dialogue "On Ideas"; the *Statesman*, *Cratylus* and *Sophist* are also "logical" dialogues.

[2] Clazomenae was located on the west coast of Asia Minor and was one of the Ionian "dodecapolis," twelve cities which the Greeks, under the leadership of Athens, settled in archaic times. One famous son of Clazomenae was the philosopher Anaxagoras, who moved to Athens at the time of Socrates' youth and taught that *Nous* or Mind was the cause of all things.

[3] Glaucon and Adeimantus were Plato's brothers and play a large role in the *Republic*. Another Cephalus, a resident of Athens, also appears at the beginning of that dialogue.

then! But his father — I believe Pyrilampes was his name."

"Ah, yes," he said, "and his own was Antiphon. But why in the world do you ask?"[4]

"These men," I said, "are fellow citizens of mine and quite the philosophers. They heard that this Antiphon spent much of his time with a certain Pythodorus, a companion of Zeno. And that those speeches
126c which Socrates and Zeno and Parmenides once made in conversation — that Antiphon heard them so many times from Pythodorus that he has them memorized."

"That's the truth," he said.

"Well," I replied, "this is what we need — to hear them through-and-through."

"Oh, that's no difficulty," he said. "For when he was a boy he practised them quite well, thoroughly. But nowadays, just like his grandfather of the same name, he spends much of his time on horsemanship. But if it's necessary, let's go to him. For he only just left here for home, and his house is nearby in Melite."[5]

127a This said, we started walking and came upon Antiphon at home, handing a bridle-bit or something to a smith to fit. Once he'd freed himself of that fellow and the brothers began to tell him why we were there, he recognized me from my previous stay and greeted me warmly. We then asked him to go through the speeches. At first he balked — for he said it was a lot of work — but at last he led us through them in full. And so Antiphon said that Pythodorus used to say that both Zeno and Parmenides once came to the Great Panathenea.[6]

b Now, Parmenides was already quite old — his hair all white — but the vision of a gentleman.[7] He was sixty-five at most. Zeno was then nearly forty, tall and pleasing to look at. (He was said to have been

---

[4] Pyrilampes was Plato's step-father and, as a descendant of a noble family and a friend of Pericles, was active in Athenian politics of the later fifth century. Antiphon, therefore, was younger than Plato, Glaucon and Adeimantus.

[5] Melite was a particular "deme" or political subdivision of Athens, in which was located many of the city proper's most famous places, including the Acropolis.

[6] A Panathenea was celebrated in mid-summer every year to honor the birth of Athena and the "synoecism" or unification of Athens. Every four years the citizens held a much larger festival, with parades and contests, called the "Great Panathenea."

The reader should remember that what follows, though it appears in dramatic 'real-time,' is all part of Cephalus' trebly indirect narration.

[7] A "gentleman," in Greek, is literally someone who is both "beautiful (or noble) and good."

Parmenides' young beloved.) They were staying, he said, with
127c Pythodorus outside the city-wall in the Potter's Quarter.[8]

So Socrates and many others with him went there, since they desired to hear Zeno's writings — after all, that was the first time they had brought them there. Socrates was then very young. Zeno himself read to them, but Parmenides chanced to be out. And there was, all-in-all, only a short part of the speeches left to be read, Pythodorus said, when he and Parmenides with him came in from outside — and Aristotle too (who became one of the Thirty).[9] So they heard only a little of the writings. However, Pythodorus, in fact, had heard them before on his own from Zeno.

After listening, Socrates asked him to re-read the first hypothesis of the first speech. Once it was read he said, "Zeno, how do you mean that? If the things that *are*, are many, then, according to you, they must be both like and unlike. But this is clearly impossible, since the unlike cannot be like nor the like unlike. Isn't that what you mean?"

"That's so," replied Zeno.

"And so if it is impossible for the unlike to be like and the like unlike, it's also impossible for there to be many things? For if there should be many, they would suffer these impossibilities. Is this, then, what your speeches seek — nothing else than to battle against everything that is commonly said by maintaining that there *is* no many? And do you think that each of your speeches is a proof of this very thing — so that the supposed proofs that 'There *is* no many' are as many as the
128a speeches you have written? Is that what you mean, or don't I understand you right?"

"No," said Zeno, "on the contrary, you have beautifully grasped the whole of what my writing seeks."

"I'm coming to understand, Parmenides," Socrates said, "that Zeno here seeks to be your partner not only in friendship but in writing! For he has written, in a certain way, the very same thing as you, but by changing it around he tries to trick us into thinking that he is saying some other thing. You in your poems say that All is one, and you do a

[8] The "Keramikos" or Potter's Quarter was a location north-west of the city which was home also to many of Athens' finest burial sites. The Panathenaic procession started there.

[9] The Thirty Tyrants (led by Plato's uncle Critias) took control of Athens in July 404 B.C. after her defeat by the Spartans in the Peloponnesian War. Their short but bloody reign of terror was ended in January 403 B.C. by the moderate oligarchs. The Thirty were all executed at that time or in the years following. One must remember that this Aristotle is *not* the same as the great fourth-century philosopher, the student of Plato.

128b both beautiful and good job of proving that; but this fellow, in turn, says that it's not many, and he offers proofs that are very many and very great. One says 'The One' and one says 'Not Many,' and so each speaks so as to seem to say nothing the same, while you are saying nearly the same thing. That's why what you say appears to be over the heads of the rest of us."

"Yes, Socrates," said Zeno. "But you have not perceived the entire truth of my writing. To be sure, you both chase and hunt down
c what I said like a Laconian hound! But this much has escaped you from the first: that in no way whatsoever is my writing so pretentious as to have been written for the reason you offer, namely, to conceal from men that it's furthering some great plot. What you mentioned is just an accidental result. The truth is that it's a sort of aid to Parmenides' speech against those who attack him by joking that if one *is*, then he and his
d speech suffer many laughable and contradictory results. So this writing refutes the asserters of the Many and pays back the same and more. It seeks to make this point clear: that if sufficiently prosecuted, their hypothesis — 'If many *is*' — would suffer even more laughable results than that of the One's *being*. I wrote it, in fact, when I was young, because I loved to fight. But someone stole a copy, so I couldn't decide
e whether it should be brought to light or not. That's what escapes you, Socrates: you don't think it was written because of a youth's love for fighting, but because of an older man's love of honor. Though, as I said, your description is not a bad likeness."

"I accept that," replied Socrates, "and I believe it is as you say. But tell me this: don't you think that there exists, in itself, some form[10]
129a of Likeness, to which is opposed a different one, which is unlike, and that both you and I and the different things which we do in fact call 'many' come to partake of these two things which *are*? And that the things that come to partake of Likeness become like in both the manner and extent that they partake, but those of Unlikeness unlike, and those of both, both? And even if all things come to partake of both these opposing things and are, by partaking in both, both like and un-
b like in themselves — why wonder? For if someone were to show that the like things themselves become unlike or the unlike like, I'd think that a marvel. But if he shows that whatever partakes of both of these has experienced both, then, Zeno, it doesn't seem at all out of place to me. No, not even if he were to show that all things are one by partaking of the One and that these same things are many, in turn, by partaking in Multitude! But if he demonstrates that whatever one is, this very thing,

[10] This is the first appearance of Socrates' famous "forms." For more on young Socrates and the forms see the introduction.

is many and that the Many, in turn, are one — of course I'll wonder at
129c that. Likewise for all the different things: if he should reveal that both the kinds and forms themselves experience these opposite experiences in themselves, it's right to wonder. But if someone demonstrates that I am one and many, why wonder? For when he seeks to show that I am many, he just mentions that my right is one thing and my left another, my front's one thing and my back's another, and likewise for upper and lower — for I do, I believe, partake of Multitude. But when he wants to
d show that I am one, he'll say that out of the seven of us who are here, I myself am one man and partake of the One. So he can show that both are true.

"If, then, someone shall try to show that for things such as stones and wood and the like, the same things are many and one, then we will say that he's demonstrated that some thing is many and one, not that the One is many or the Many's one. He's not even said anything wondrous, but only what in fact all of us should readily agree upon. But if someone, as I just said, shall first distinguish the forms as separate in themselves, such as Likeness and Unlikeness and Multitude and the
e One and Rest and Motion and all the like, and then will show that in themselves these things can be mixed together and separated, I'd admire that with wonder, Zeno!" he said. "Now I do believe that you've worked over these things quite bravely; but, as I've said, I would admire this much more: if someone could demonstrate that even in the
130a forms themselves — in the things grasped by reasoning — there is everywhere tangled up that same impasse which you proved is present in the things we see."

While Socrates was speaking, Pythodorus said, he himself thought that at each word both Parmenides and Zeno were going to get angry. But they kept their mind on Socrates and, with frequent glances to one another, they smiled as if admiring him. Which is, in fact, what Parmenides told him, once he was done.

b "Socrates," he said, "you ought to be admired for your zeal for speeches! And tell me, did you, on your own, come up with this division that you speak of between these forms, separate unto themselves, and, separated from them, the things that partake of them? And does it seem to you that Likeness itself is separate from the likeness that we possess? And so on with one and many and everything that you heard of just now from Zeno?"

"It certainly does," answered Socrates.

"Well how about these sorts of things," said Parmenides, "such as a form of Justice in itself and of Beauty and of Good and so on?"

"Yes," he said.

130c "But what about this: a form of Man separate from us and all those like us — some very form of Man, or of Fire or Water?"

"I've hit a dead end many times, Parmenides," he replied, "over these, over whether it's necessary to speak much the same about them or differently."[11]

"Well then, Socrates, what about those things that would seem to be laughable, such as Hair and Mud and Dirt or any different thing that's very worthless and lowly? Are you at an impasse over whether it is or is not necessary to say that there is a separate form of each of these,
d something different than what we can lay our hands on?"

"No, not at all!" answered Socrates. "For these things are as we see them right here, and it would be grossly out of place to think that there is some form of them. To be sure, it has troubled me that the same case does not apply to all, but whenever I come to this, I run off, fearing to fall and perish in some abyss of foolishness. In the end, then, I return to these things that just now we were saying are forms and I spend my time working over them."

e "Well, you are still young, Socrates," said Parmenides, "and philosophy has not yet grabbed you as it will, in my opinion. Then you will dishonor none of these things; but as for now, you still look to the opinions of men, because of your age. But tell me this, then: does it seem to you that, as you say, there are these forms from which the different things here, by partaking in them, get their names? For example, the things that partake in Likeness become like, but those in
131a Greatness great, and those in Beauty and Justice both just and beautiful?"

"Of course," replied Socrates.

"And so each thing that partakes comes to partake either of the whole form or of a part? Or could there be some way of partaking separate from these?"

"How could there be?" he said.

"Then does it seem to you that the whole form is in each of the many things, while still being one, or how?"

"What prevents it, Parmenides," said Socrates, " from being one?"

b "Although one and the same, then, its whole will be in many

[11] The word here translated "dead end," and sometimes "impasse," is *aporia*, the state of "being-at-a-loss" or without anywhere to turn that the older Socrates is famous for always claiming to be in and to lead others into (see *Meno* 80a-d).

separate beings at the same time, and so it would be separated from itself."

"Not if it is like a day," he said, "which, although one and the same, is many places at once and is not at all separate from itself. In this way each of the forms could be one, the same and in all things at once."

"Socrates," he replied, "how nicely you make one and the same thing many places at once! It is as if after covering many men with a sail you would say that it is one whole over many. Or is this not what you mean to say?"

131c "That's fair," he answered.

"Well then would the whole sail be over each man, or a different part of it over each different man?"

"A part."

"Then, Socrates," he said, "the forms themselves can be partitioned and the things that partake of them would partake of a part. The whole would no longer be in each, but each would possess a part."

"So it appears."

"Well then Socrates, are you willing to say that one form can, in truth, be partitioned by us and still be one?"

"No way," he replied.

"Try to see then," he said, "if you'll partition Greatness itself,
d then each of the many great things will be great by means of a part that's smaller than Greatness itself — doesn't that appear illogical?"

"Of course," he answered.

"But what? If something possesses an individual small part of the Equal, will it possess something that, though less than the Equal itself, will make its possessor equal to anything else?"

"Impossible!"

"Then let one of us possess a part of the Small. Since it's just a part, the Small will be greater than it. Get it? — the Small itself will be
e greater! But whatever that subtracted piece is added to will be smaller, not greater, than before!"

"Well that certainly can't be," he said.

"Is there, then, some other way, Socrates," he asked, "that the different things will partake of your forms, since they're able to partake neither as parts nor as wholes?"

"No by Zeus!" he exclaimed. "It doesn't seem to me to be at all easy to determine that!"

"But what then? How do you feel about this —"

"What's that?"

132a " — I think that you think that each form is one because of this: whenever many things seem to you to be great, it seems probable to you, as you look over them all, that there *is* some one and the same idea. From this you conclude that the Great is one."

"That's the truth," he replied.

"But what about the Great itself and the different great things — if, in the same way, you look over them all with your soul, will there not appear, in turn, some great thing that makes all of them, by necessity, appear great?"

"It looks that way."

"A different form of Greatness, then, will be revealed, in addition to what was Greatness itself and the things that partake of it. And above all of these, in turn, another, that makes them all great. And so each of
b your forms will no longer be one, but will be boundless in multitude."

"But Parmenides," Socrates said, "couldn't it be that each of these forms is a thought and properly comes to *be* nowhere but in souls? Then each could in fact be one and would not still suffer the things you just mentioned."

"What then?" he asked. "Each is one of our thoughts — but are there thoughts of nothing?"

"Impossible," he replied.

"So of something?"

"Yes."

c "Of something that is or is not?"

"That is."

"So of one thing — which thing in fact the thought thinks is present in all cases as some one idea?"

"Yes."

"Then won't a form be this thing that is thought to be one, since it's always the same in all cases?"

"It appears necessary."

"But what now?" asked Parmenides. "For doesn't it seem to you that, since it is necessary, you say, for other things to partake of forms, either each thing consists of thoughts and everything thinks or, although thoughts, they're thought-less?"

"Well that too," he replied, "makes no sense. However,

132d Parmenides, here's how it really appears to me to be: these forms stand in nature like patterns. The different things resemble them and are likenesses, and so the different things' participation in the forms turns out to be nothing else than to be made in their likeness!"

"If then," he asked, "something looks like a form, can the form not be like its likeness, insofar as that thing's been made like it? Or is there some trick that can make the like be like what's not like it?"

"No, there isn't."

"But doesn't a great necessity force the like, along with the thing
e like it, to partake of one and the same form?"

"Necessarily."

"But whatever the like things are like by participating in — isn't that the form itself?"

"Entirely so."

"Nothing, then, can be like the form nor can the form be like anything else. Otherwise there will always appear a different form be-
133a yond the form; and if that is like anything, another still. And there will never be an end to the genesis of new forms as long as the form becomes like the thing that partakes of it."

"That's most true."

"It's not by likeness, then, that the different things come to partake of forms. Instead it's necessary to seek a different way of partaking."

"It looks that way."

"Do you see then, Socrates," he asked, "how great an impasse lies before anyone who tries to determine that there are forms in themselves?"

"Very much so!"

"And so know well," he said, "that you have, so to speak, not
b even touched upon how great an impasse there is if you try to posit each form as one, somehow distinguishing them from the beings."

"How's that?" he replied.

"There are many different reasons," he answered, "but here's the greatest. If someone should argue that the forms themselves — should they be as we say they must be — cannot, properly speaking, be known, no one could prove to whomever argues this that he's mistaken, unless the one arguing chanced to be experienced in many things and not naturally dull. This person would have to be willing to follow the fellow working over the proof through many cases and over a long distance,

133c otherwise he who forces them to be unknowable would be persuasive."

"Why's that Parmenides?" asked Socrates.

"Because, Socrates, I think that both you and anyone else who posits that there's a certain beinghood in itself for each thing would first agree that none of them *are* among us."

"How could it still be 'in itself' then?" replied Socrates.

"Beautiful," he said. "And so all those ideas that are what they are relative to one another have their beinghood relative to themselves and not in relation to the things among us — whether likenesses or, how-
d ever one posits them, what we partake of and from which, then, we are called by certain names. The things among us, then, these things which take the forms' names, are themselves related only to themselves, but not to the forms, and they belong only to themselves and not to whatever things are named the same."

"How do you mean that?" asked Socrates.

"Here's an example," said Parmenides. "If one of us is a master or a slave of someone, he is not, of course, a slave to what Master itself
e is, nor is the master a master of what Slave itself is. Instead, since he's a man, he's both of these to another man. For Mastership itself is what it is of Slavery itself, and likewise Slavery itself is slavery to Mastership itself. The things among us have no power in relation to those things, nor they to us; instead, like I said, those things belong to themselves and are in relation to themselves and so too the things among us to
134a themselves. Or do you not understand what I mean?"

"Oh, I understand well," replied Socrates.

"And so also knowledge. Would what Knowledge itself is," he asked, "be knowledge of what Truth itself is?"

"Of course."

"But then what each branch of knowledge is would be knowledge of what each of the beings is, or no?"

"Yes."

"But wouldn't the knowledge among us be of the truth among us; and, in turn, each branch of knowledge among us would have to be
b knowledge of each of the beings among us?"

"Necessarily."

"And yet the forms themselves, as you agree — neither do we possess them nor could they *be* among us."

"No, they couldn't."

"But surely what each of the kinds themselves is, is known by that

very form, the form of Knowledge?"

"Yes."

"Which we certainly don't possess."

"No, we don't."

"None of the forms, then, is known by us, since we don't partake of Knowledge itself."

"It doesn't look that way."

"Then what the Beautiful itself is and the Good and all the things
134c that we do suppose to be ideas are unknown to us."

"I'm afraid so."

"See then something still more terrible than this!"

"What's that?"

"You would probably say that if there *is* in fact a certain kind itself of Knowledge, it is far more precise than the knowledge among us, and the same for Beauty and all the rest."

"Yes."

"And so if anything else does partake of Knowledge itself, wouldn't you say that god, more than anyone else, possesses this most precise knowledge?"

"Necessarily."

d "Then will the god, in turn, be able to know the things among us, since he possesses Knowledge itself?"

"Why not?"

"Because," said Parmenides, "we agreed, Socrates, that whatever power they do have, those forms have no power relative to the things among us, nor the things among us relative to them. Instead, each group relates only to themselves."

"Yes, this was agreed."

"And so if the god possesses this most precise Mastership and this most precise Knowledge, then their mastership could never master us,
e nor could their knowledge know us or anything else of the things among us. Likewise, we do not rule over them by the authority among us, nor, by our knowledge, do we know anything of the divine. According to this speech, in turn, they are not our masters nor do they know anything of human affairs — since they are gods!"

"But what an altogether wondrous speech, if it strips the god of knowing!"

"Nevertheless, Socrates," said Parmenides, "the forms must, by

135a necessity, have these problems and many more still, if there are these ideas of the beings and if one distinguishes each form on its own. The result is that whoever hears this hits a dead end and argues that these things *are* not; and if, at most, they should *be*, well, then, great necessity keeps them unknown to human nature. And while he says these things this fellow will even seem to be talking sense and, as we said before, he will be wondrously hard to convince. Only a naturally gifted man could learn that there is a certain kind and beinghood, in itself, for
b each thing; and only a still more wondrous person will discover all these things and be able teach someone else to judge them clearly and sufficiently for himself."

"I agree with you, Parmenides," Socrates said. "To my mind, you speak well."

"And yet," said Parmenides, "if someone, in turn, Socrates, after focusing on all these problems and others still, shall deny that there are forms of the beings and will not distinguish a certain form of each single thing, wherever he turns he'll understand nothing, since he does
c not allow that there is an ever-same idea for each of the beings. And so he will entirely destroy the power of dialogue. But you seem to me only too aware of this."

"That's the truth," he replied.

"What then will you do about philosophy? Where will you turn if all this is unknown?"

"At present, at least, I can't seem to see."

"It's because, Socrates," he said, "you are trying too soon, before being trained, to define some Beautiful and Just and Good and
d each one of the forms. I noticed this even the day before yesterday when I overheard your conversation with this fellow Aristotle. Know well: that zeal which drives you towards speeches is beautiful and divine. But you must draw yourself back and train more, while you're still young, in a gymnastic that seems useless and which the many call 'idle talk.' If you don't, the truth will escape you."

"What's the manner, Parmenides," he asked, "of this gymnastic?"

"It is what you heard just now from Zeno," he replied. "Except
e for this, in fact, I really admired you when you were speaking to him, because you wouldn't investigate this perplexity among the visible things nor even in reference to them, but only in reference to what most of all one should grasp by speech and consider forms."

"That's because," he replied, "this way, there seems to me no

difficulty in showing what beings are like and unlike and experience anything else."

"Beautiful," he said. "But, in addition, you must do this: do not only investigate the results of a hypothesis if each hypothesized thing *is*,
136a but also hypothesize that this same thing *is* not. Do that, if you want to get more gymnastic training."

"What do you mean?" he asked.

"Take, if you like," he said, "this hypothesis that Zeno hypothesized: 'If many *is*, what must result both for the Many themselves in relation to themselves and in relation to the One and for the One both in relation to itself and in relation to the Many?' Then, in turn, if many *is* not, you must inquire what will result both for the One and the Many both in relation to themselves and in relation to each another. And yet
b again, if you'll hypothesize, 'If Likeness *is*' or *is* not, what in the case of each hypothesis will be the result both for the very things hypothesized and for the different things both in relation to themselves and in relation to each other? And it's the same speech for Unlikeness and Motion and Rest and Generation and Corruption and even *being* itself and *not-being*. In a word, whatever you hypothesize about, whether it *is* or *is* not and whatever other experience it suffers, you must always investi-
c gate the results in relation to itself and in relation to each one of the different things, whichever you chose — in relation both to many and to all of them, likewise. And, in turn, whether you hypothesize that what you have hypothesized *is* or *is* not, you must investigate these different things both in relation to themselves and in relation to whatever else you choose, if you intend, after being completely trained, to attain a lordly view of the True."

"It's quite an impossible task, Parmenides, that you're talking about, and I don't really understand it. But why don't you hypothesize something and go through it for me, so that I can understand better?"

d "Why, that's a lot of work, Socrates," he replied, "to demand from a man my age!"

"Well then you," said Socrates, "Zeno — why don't you go through it for us?"

And Zeno, he said, said laughing, "Socrates, let's ask Parmenides himself, since it's not, as he says, a trivial thing. Or don't you see how much work you're demanding? If there were more of us, it wouldn't be right to ask. For it's unseemly, especially for someone of his age, to
e speak such things before the many, since the many do not know that without this digressing and wandering through all things it is impossible to possess a mind that's hit upon the True. And so Parmenides, I

join Socrates in asking, that I may also listen after all this time."

Now once Zeno said that, Antiphon said that Pythodorus said that he and Aristotle and the others asked Parmenides to do nothing else than to demonstrate what he meant. Then Parmenides said, "Necessary it is to obey. And yet I seem to be suffering something like that
137a Ibyceian horse, which, as a prizewinner but old, is about to take part in a chariot race and, being experienced, trembles at what is about to happen. Ibycus says that he resembles the horse since, although he is so old and unwilling, Necessity forces him to fall in love.[12] And so I seem quite fearful, since I remember what sort of and how great a multitude of speeches I must swim through at my age. Nevertheless, I must show you this favor, especially since, as Zeno says, we are by ourselves.

b "So where will we start and what will we hypothesize first? Or, since now it seems I must play at this worklike game, shall I begin with myself and my hypothesis, that is, hypothesizing about the One itself, whether one *is* or one *is* not, what must result?"

"Of course," said Zeno.

"Who then," he asked, "will answer me? How about the youngest? He would be the least trouble and would say exactly what he thinks. And, at the same time, his answers would give me some time to relax."

c "I'm ready for you, Parmenides," said Aristotle. "For you mean me if you mean the youngest. Just ask and I'll answer."

So be it, he said. If there's one, then the One could in no way be many?[13]

---

[12] Ibycus was a late sixth century lyric poet who lived in Italy. The poem referred to here was saved by the scholiast to the *Parmenides* (see Ibycus 287 in Page's *Poetae Melici Graeci*). A literal translation of the whole follows:

> "But Eros, gazing at me from under
> Dark eyelids, melting me with his eyes,
> With all sorts of charms does he drive me
> Into the inescapable nets of Kypris.
> O yes, I do tremble going in,
> Just as a horse, yoked up, a prizewiner but old,
> Unwillingly goes to contend with swift chariots."

[13] This is the first hypothesis and argument: One is. In it Parmenides deduces what the results of the hypothesis will be for the One itself. The argument extends from here, 137c4, to 142a7. To help the reader keep track of where he is in this ocean of words, I have included a Roman numeral at the head of each page that denotes which argument is going on (for a synopsis of all eight see the introduction, p.5). I also note at the head whether Parmenides is deducing results from the hypothesis for "one" or for "Different things," and I offer a brief indication of what subject in particular he is discussing

How could it?

So it must neither have a part nor be a whole.

Why's that?

Surely the part is a part of a whole —

Yes.

— But what is the whole? Wouldn't a whole be whatever lacks no part?

Of course.

So in both cases the One would consist of parts — if it were a whole or if it had parts.

Necessarily.

Then in both cases, likewise, the One would be many and not one.

137d True.

But surely it must be one, not many.

It must.

Therefore it will neither be a whole nor have parts — if the One will be one.

It won't.

And so, if the One has no part, it would have neither beginning nor end nor middle. For such things would then be its parts.

Right.

And yet beginning and end are certainly a limit to each thing.

How not?

Then the One is limitless, if it has neither beginning nor end.

Limitless.

e And without shape, therefore: for it partakes of neither round nor straight.

How's that?

Well round, of course, is that whose extremities on every side hold off equally from the center.

Yes.

(e.g. rest, motion, likeness, unlikeness, etc.). This concise system should help the reader follow the arguments as well as compare Parmenides' various treatments of particular subjects amid all eight major arguments.

And straight, then, is whose middle is in front of both extremities.

That's so.

And so the One would have parts and would be many, if it should partake of either a straight or round shape.

Of course.

Therefore it's neither straight nor round, since, in fact, it has no parts.

138a Right.

Furthermore, since it's of this very sort, it would not be anywhere. For it wouldn't be either in anything else or in itself.

How's that?

Well, if it were in anything else, surely it would be surrounded in a circle by whatever it's in and would be touched by its many parts in many places. But since it is one and partless and does not partake of
b circularity, it's impossible for it to be touched on many sides in a circle.

Impossible.

And likewise, should it be in itself, it would surround itself by nothing else than itself — if it could, in fact, be in itself. For that something be in something that doesn't surround it, is impossible.

Impossible.

And so the thing surrounding would be one thing and the thing being surrounded another, since a whole, of course, will not both suffer and do the same thing at the same time. And thus the One would not still be one but rather two.

It wouldn't.

Therefore the One is not anywhere — neither being in itself nor in anything else.

No, it isn't.

See then if, being this way, it is able to stand at rest or be in motion.

Well, why couldn't it?

Because, if it were in fact in motion, either it would go some-
c where or it would change. For these are the only motions.

Yes.

But should the One change from itself, it's surely impossible for it still to be one.

Impossible.

So it isn't moved by change, at any rate.

It appears not.

But by going somewhere?

Perhaps.

And yet if the One goes somewhere, either it goes around in the same place in a circle or it exchanges one place for another.

Necessarily.

And so, should it go around in a circle, it must have a middle as a base and various parts, parts of itself, that go around the middle. But
138d since it properly has neither middle nor parts, is there some trick to make it go around the middle in a circle?

None at all.

Then surely, should it change place, it comes to be in one place from another and so is in motion?

If in fact it is, at any rate.

That it be anywhere in anything — wasn't this shown to be impossible for it?

Yes.

Then it is even more impossible for it to come to be?

I don't understand why.

If something is coming to be in something, isn't it necessary that, while it is still coming to be therein, it not yet be in it and yet not be still entirely outside it — if, in fact, it is already coming to be therein?

Necessarily.

e If, then, anything else suffers this, it could only be something that has parts. For a certain part of it would already be in the thing, but at the same time part of it would be outside. But whatever has no parts will certainly be unable, in any way, either to be inside or outside of something, as a whole, all at once.

True.

And whatever has no parts nor chances to be a whole — wouldn't it be still more impossible for it to come to be anywhere, since it could come to be therein neither by parts nor as a whole?

It appears.

Then neither by going anywhere and coming to be in something
139a does it change place, nor by revolving in the same place, nor by changing.

It doesn't look like it.

Thus as regards every motion, the One is motionless.

Motionless.

And, furthermore, we say that it is impossible for it to be in something.

We do say this.

So then it is never in the same thing.

Why's that?

Because it would already be in that thing which is the same.

Of course.

But it was able to be in neither itself nor another.

No, it wasn't.

And so the One is never in the same thing.

It looks like it isn't.

b Well, then, since it is never in the same thing, it's never at peace nor does it stand at rest.

No, it couldn't.

The One, then, so it looks, neither stands at rest nor is in motion.

To be sure, it appears not.

Nor will it be the same as another or as itself, nor, in turn, would it be other than itself or another.

How's that?

Should it be somehow other than itself, it would be other than one and would not be one.

True.

And, in addition, should it be the very same as another it would
c be that thing, but would not be itself. So, again, it would not be what, in fact, it is — one — but rather other than one.

No, it wouldn't.

It won't, then, be the same as another or other than itself.

No, it won't.

But it certainly won't be other than another, as long as it is one.

For one is not properly other than anything — only other, and nothing else, is other than another.

139d Right.

So, by being one, it will not be other. Or do you believe it will?

Certainly not.

But if not by this, it won't be so by itself; but if not by itself, it won't be so. Since it is in no way other, it will be other than nothing.

Right.

Nor will it be the same as itself.

But how not?

The very nature of the One is surely not the same as of the Same.

Why's that?

Because whenever something becomes the same as something it does not become one.

Well, what then?

Should it become the same as the many, it would necessarily become many and not one.

True.

But if the One and the Same in no way differ, whenever something became the same, it would always become one; and whenever one, the same.

e Of course.

If, then, the One will be the same as itself, it will not be one with itself. And thus, although one, it will not be one. But of course this is impossible. Therefore it is also impossible for the one to be other than another or the same as itself.

Impossible.

So the One clearly would be other or the same as neither itself nor another.

No, it wouldn't.

Nor will it be like or unlike anything, either itself or another.

Why's that?

Because whatever has somehow experienced the Same is like.

Yes.

But it was shown that the nature of the One is separate from the

Same.

140a This was shown.

And yet if the One experienced something separate from being one, it would have experienced being more than one. But this is impossible.

Yes.

So there's no way, then, for the One to have experienced the same thing as anything else or itself.

It appears not.

It's not possible, then, for it to be like anything else or itself.

It doesn't look like it.

Nor has the One experienced being at all other; for this way it would have experienced being more than one.

Yes, more.

But whatever has had any sort of experience other than itself or anything else would be unlike itself or anything else, just as whatever
b has experienced the Same is like.

Right.

But the very One, so it looks, having had no sort of other experience, is in no way unlike either itself or another.

No, it isn't.

Therefore the One would be neither like nor unlike either another or itself.

It appears not.

And, in addition, being of this very sort, it will be neither equal nor unequal to itself or anything else.

How?

Should it be equal, it will consist of the same measures as that to which it is equal.

Yes.

But should it somehow be greater or less, then, as concerns what-
c ever it is commensurate with, it will have more measures than the lesser things and less than the greater.

Yes.

But as concerns whatever it is not commensurate with, than some it will consist of smaller measures, than others, greater.

How not?

And so isn't it impossible for whatever doesn't partake of the Same to consist of the same measures or anything else whatsoever the same?

Impossible.

Then it would be equal neither to itself nor to anything else, since it would not consist of the same measures.

It appears not, to be sure.

Furthermore, should it consist of more or less measures, howsoever many are its measures, of so many parts would it consist. And so,
140d again, it will no longer be one but rather as many as are the measures.

Right.

But if, in fact, it should consist of one measure, it would be equal to the measure. Yet this was shown to be impossible: that it be equal to anything.

This was shown.

Therefore, since it does not partake of one measure or many or few, and since all-in-all it does not partake of the Same, it will never be equal, so it looks, to itself or to anything else. Nor, again, will it be greater or less than itself or another.

Entirely so.

e But what? Does it seem possible for the One to be older or younger or to have the same age?

Well, why not?

Because surely should it have the same age as itself or anything else, it will partake of Equality of time and Likeness — things which we said the One does not partake of, that is, either Likeness or Equality.

We did say that.

And, in addition, that it does not partake of Unlikeness and Inequality — we said this too.

Of course.

141a How then will something of this sort be able to be older or younger than anything, or to have the same age as anything — since it's of this sort?

There's no way.

So then the One would neither be younger nor older nor have the same age as either itself or anything else.

It appears not.

Then would the One be unable to *be* in time in any way, if it should be of this sort? Or isn't it necessary, if something is in time, for it to be becoming ever older than itself?

It's necessary.

Now, isn't the older, in fact, always older than the younger?

What else?

141b So whatever becomes older than itself at the same time also becomes younger than itself — if, in fact, it is going to have something to become older than.

How do you mean that?

Like this: One thing cannot become different from another when it already is different; rather, since it already is, it must already be; and if it has become so, it must have become so; or if it's going to be so, it must be going to be so. But if it's becoming so, it must neither have become nor be going to be nor be different yet; rather, it must become so and nothing else.

c That's quite necessary.

But, to be sure, the older is a difference from the younger and nothing else.

It is.

Then whatever is becoming older than itself must necessarily at the same time also become younger than itself.

It looks like it.

But, of course, it cannot come into being more or less — in respect to time — than itself. Rather it must become and be and have become and be going to be for an equal time with itself.

These things too are necessary.

And therefore it is necessary, so it looks, for everything that is in
d time and partakes of this sort of thing to be the same age, itself as itself, and at the same time to become both older and younger than itself.

I'm afraid so.

But surely the very One can partake in no such experiences.

No, it can't partake.

Therefore it has no share in time, and it *is* not in any time.

No indeed, just as the speech claims.

What then? Don't the was and the had-become and the was-becoming seem to signify participation in a time which has become?

Very much so.

141e But what? Don't the will-be and the will-become and the will-be-made-to-become seem to signify partaking in a time going to be hereafter?

Yes.

And certainly the is and the is-becoming seem to signify partaking in the present time?

Of course.

If, then, the One in no way participates in any time, then it has never become nor was it becoming nor was it once, nor has it become now nor is it becoming nor is it, nor will it become hereafter nor will it be made to become nor will it be.

Most true!

Is there any way different than one of these for something to partake of beinghood?

There is not.

Therefore in no way does the One partake of beinghood.

It doesn't look like it.

So the One in no way *is*.

It appears not.

And so it *is* in no way so as to be one. For it would already be a thing and partake of beinghood. But, so it looks, the One neither is one nor *is* — if it's necessary to trust this very speech.

142a I'm afraid so.

But whatever is not — could there be anything for it or of it, should it not be?

And how could there?

So, then, there's no name for it nor account, nor is there any knowledge of it nor perception nor opinion.

It appears not.

And, then, it's not named nor spoken of nor opined nor known, nor do any of the things that *are* perceive it.

It doesn't look like it.

Well, then, is it possible that this is the way it is concerning the One?

No, it sure doesn't seem so to me, at least!

142b Do you want us then to go back up to the hypothesis once again from the beginning, in case something might appear different to us as we go back through it?[14]

I very much want to.

And so, if one *is*, we say that the results concerning it, whatever they chance to be, we must agree on them. Or is this not so?

Yes, it is.

Look then from the beginning: if one *is*, is it able to be and yet not to partake of beinghood?

No, it cannot.

And so the beinghood of the One would *be* while not being the same as the One. For otherwise it would not be its beinghood, nor
c would it, the One, partake of it. Instead, to say that 'one *is*' and 'one is one' would be alike. But this is not now the hypothesis, 'If one is one, what must result,' but rather it's, 'If one *is*.' Or is this not so?

Of course it is.

And so the '*is*' signifies something else from the 'one?'

Necessarily.

Then whenever someone says, in short, that one *is*, would he be saying anything else than this — that the One partakes of beinghood?

Of course.

But let us ask again, if one *is*, what will result. Look into whether it isn't necessary for this hypothesis to signify that the One is of such a sort as to have parts —

d How?

— Like this: If the '*is*' is said of the One which *is* and the 'one' of the beinghood that's one, but the beinghood and the One are not the same, and rather are said of that which we hypothesized — namely, of the One which *is* —, then isn't it necessary that a one that *is* be itself the whole, and that the One and the *being* come into being as pieces of this?

Necessarily.

[14] Now we begin the second argument. The hypothesis is still "One is," and once more Parmenides deduces the results for the One. But the results are the exact opposite of those in the first argument. This argument runs from 142a8 to 155e3. It is by far the largest of the eight, just a bit bigger than the other seven combined.

Then will we call each of these two pieces only a piece, or must the piece itself be called a piece of the whole?

Of the whole.

And, then, it's a whole, whatever is one, and has a piece.

Of course.

What then? Does each of these pieces of the One that is, the One
142e and Being, lack something? Does the One lack the piece that's the *being* or Being the piece that's the One?

They would not.

And so, again, each of the pieces holds fast to the One and Being, and the very least piece comes to consist, in turn, of two pieces, and, according to the same speech, it is always this way. Namely, whatever piece comes to be, it always holds fast to these two pieces; for the One always holds fast to Being and Being to the One. The result is that, since it always becomes two, it necessarily is never one.

143a Entirely so.

And so the One that *is* would be limitless in multitude?

It certainly looks that way.

Come now, once more here.

Where?

Do we say that the One partakes of beinghood, therefore it *is*?

Yes.

And because of this, in fact, the One that *is* appears to be many.

That's so.

But what? The One itself, which, in fact, we say partakes of beinghood — if we grasp it with the understanding, alone by itself, without that which we say it partakes of, then, at least, will this same thing appear only one or also many?

One — that's what I myself believe.

b Let us see then. It's necessary for its beinghood to be one thing, something different, and it another, if, in fact, the One is not beinghood but rather, as one, partakes of beinghood.

Necessarily.

And so if beinghood is one thing and the One another, then neither by being 'one' is the One other than beinghood, nor by being 'beinghood' is beinghood something different from the one, but by

being other and different they are other than one another.

Of course.

So the Other is not the same as the One or as beinghood?

How could it be?

143c What then? If we will choose whichever you like of them, either beinghood and the Other or beinghood and the One or the One and the Other, then in each choice don't we choose some two that could correctly be called 'both?'

How?

Like this: is it possible to say 'beinghood?'

It is.

And likewise to say 'one?'

This too.

Then haven't each of the two been spoken of?

Yes.

But whenever I say something is both beinghood and one, then don't I say both?

Of course.

And so too, if both beinghood and other or both other and one, and so in every way and in each case I speak of both?

Yes.

d But whatever are correctly addressed as 'both,' is it possible for them to be both but not two?

It's not possible.

But whatever are two, is there some trick to make each of them not one?

None whatsoever.

Of these, then, — since in fact they all result in pairs —, each would be one.

It appears.

But if each of them is one, whenever any one whatsoever be added by any sort of yoke, don't they all become three?

Yes.

And isn't three odd and two even?

How not?

But what? Since there are two, isn't it necessary that there also be
143e twice? And since three, thrice — if in fact it is the case that two is twice one and three is thrice one?

Necessarily.

But since there is two and twice, isn't it necessary for there to be two twice? And since there's three and thrice, isn't it necessary, in turn, for there to be three thrice?

How not?

But what? Since there's three and twice and two and thrice, isn't it necessary that there be three twice and two thrice?

Very much so.

144a And so there would be even even-times and odd odd-times and even odd-times and odd even-times.

This is so.

If, then, this is so, do you believe that there is any number left out which doesn't have to *be* by necessity?

None at all.

If, therefore, one *is*, it is necessary for number also to be.

Necessarily.

And yet, if there is, in fact, number, there would be many things and a limitless multitude of beings. Or doesn't number become limitless in multitude even while partaking in beinghood?

Of course it does.

And so if all number partakes of beinghood, would each piece of number also partake of it?

Yes.

b Over all the many beings, therefore, is beinghood apportioned and does it stand aloof from none of the beings, from neither the smallest nor the greatest? Or isn't it illogical even to ask this? For, really, how could beinghood itself stand aloof from any of the beings?

There's no way.

So, then, it has been chopped up into the very smallest and greatest things and beings of all sorts, and it is by far the most partitioned of all things, and there will be infinite parts of beinghood.

c That's the way it is.

Most numerous, then, are its parts.

Most numerous, of course.

What then? Is any of these things, which is a part of beinghood, nevertheless no part at all?

And how could this sort of thing come to be?

Well if, at any rate, I believe that there is, as long as it *is*, it must always, by necessity, be one thing; it's impossible that it be nothing.

Necessarily.

To every part of beinghood, therefore, the One is attached and is not lacking in either the smaller or greater parts or in anything else.

That's so.

Then, if one be many places at once, is it at the same time a whole?
144d Think about that.

Well, I'm thinking about it and I see that it's impossible.

It's been partitioned, then, if in fact it's not a whole. For in no other way, certainly, will it be present in all the parts of beinghood at the same time, unless it's been partitioned.

Yes.

And yet a great necessity forces whatever has parts to be as many as its parts are.

Necessarily.

Then we were not speaking the truth, just now, when we said that beinghood had been apportioned into the most numerous parts. For it had not been apportioned into more than the One, but rather into an
e equal number, so it looks, as the One. For Being neither lacks the One nor the One Being; rather, since they are two, they are always, in every case, equal.

It appears entirely so.

The One, therefore, having being chopped up by beinghood, is both many and limitless in multitude.

It appears.

Therefore, not only is the being that is one many, but even the One itself, since it has been divided up by Being, must, by necessity, be many.

Entirely so.

And yet, since the pieces are pieces of a whole, wouldn't the One have been limited by the whole? Or are pieces not surrounded by the whole?

145a Necessarily they are.

But surely whatever surrounds would be a limit.

How not?

The One that *is*, then, is somehow both one and many, and a whole and pieces, and limited and limitless in multitude.

It appears.

Then since it is, in fact, limited, wouldn't it also have extremities?

This is necessary.

But what? If a whole, wouldn't it also have beginning and middle and end? Or could there be some whole without these three? And if any one of these shall stand aloof from something, will it still be able to be a whole?

It will not be able.

And so in fact it looks as though the One would have beginning
b and end and middle.

It would have them.

But surely the middle, at any rate, holds off equally from the extremities. For otherwise it wouldn't be a middle.

No, it wouldn't.

And so, should it be of this sort, it looks like the One would partake of some shape, whether straight or round or some mixture of both.

Yes, it would partake.

Since, then, this is the case, won't it be both in itself and in anything else?

How?

Surely each of the parts is in the whole and none is outside the whole.

That's so.

But all the parts are surrounded by the whole?

c Yes.

And yet the One is all the parts, its parts, and is neither at all more nor less than all of them.

No, it isn't.

And so the One is also the whole?

How not?

If, then, all the parts chance to be in the whole and they are all the One and it is the whole, but they are all surrounded by the whole, then by the One would the One be surrounded, and so the One itself would already be in itself.

It appears.

However, the whole, at any rate, is not, in turn, in the parts,
145d neither in all nor in any. For if in all, it is necessarily also in one — since, should it not be in a certain one, still less could it be in all. If this one is among them all, and the whole is not in this, how will it still be present in them all?

There's no way.

But it's not even in some of the parts: for if the whole should be in some, then the more would be in the less, which is impossible.

Yes, impossible.

But should the whole not be in more nor in one nor in all the parts, isn't it necessary that the whole be in a certain other thing or else be nowhere?

e Necessarily.

And so, since whatever is nowhere would be nothing, even if it's a whole, and since it is not in itself, isn't it necessary for it to be in anything else?

Of course.

Insofar, then, as the One is a whole, it's in something else. But insofar as it chances to be all those parts, it's in itself. And thus the One itself must, by necessity, be both in itself and in another.

Necessarily.

Since it is clearly of this nature, isn't it necessary that the One both be in motion and stand at rest?

How?

Surely it stands at rest, if in fact it is in itself. For, should it be in
146a one thing and not go away from this, it would be in the same thing, in itself.

Yes, it is.

But whatever is always in the same thing must, by necessity, without a doubt, always be standing at rest.

Of course.

But what? Since, in opposition, the One is always in another, it necessarily is never in the same thing. But since it's never in the same thing, it musn't stand at rest. And by not standing at rest mustn't it be in motion?

That's so.

It's necessary, therefore, for the One, since it is always both in itself and in another, always both to be in motion and to stand at rest.

It appears.

And, in addition, it must be the same as itself and other than
146b itself, and likewise both the same as and other than the different things, if in fact it has also experienced those previous things.

How?

Surely everything is to everything else like this: either it is the same or other, or if not the same and not other, it would be a part of whatever it is thus related to or it would be as a whole is to a part.

It appears.

Then is the One itself a part of itself?

No way.

Nor, then, would it be a whole of itself, as to a part, as though being a part in relation to itself.

No, it wouldn't.

c But is the One other than one?

Surely not!

Nor, then, would it be other than itself.

Certainly not.

If, then, it is neither other nor whole nor part in relation to itself, isn't it necessary for it to be the same as itself?

Necessarily.

But what? Isn't it necessary for whatever is in another place than itself (since itself is in the same place as itself) to be other than itself — if, in fact, it will be in another place?

It seems so to me, at any rate.

But, in fact, the One has been shown to be this way: it is at the same time both in itself and in another.

Yes, this was shown.

So it looks like, by this, the One would be other than itself.

146d It looks that way.

What then? If something is other than something, won't it be other than whatever is other?

Necessarily.

And so all the things that are not one are other than the One, and the One is other than whatever is not one?

How not?

The One, then, would be other than the different things.

Other.

Look then: aren't the Same itself and the Other opposed to one another?

How not?

Well, then, will the Same ever be able to be in the Other or the Other in the Same?

They will not be able.

If, therefore, the Other will never be in the Same, then there is no being which the Other is in for any amount of time: for if it should be
e in anything whatsoever, for that amount of time the Other would be in the Same. Or is this not so?

It's so.

But since it is never in the Same, the Other would never be in any of the beings.

True.

So the Other would be neither in whatever is not one nor in the One.

No, it wouldn't.

Then not by the Other would the One be other than whatever is not one, nor by it would whatever is not one be other than the One.

No, they wouldn't.

But surely not by themselves would they be other than one another, since they do not partake of the Other.

147a How would they?

But if neither by themselves are they other nor by the Other, then wouldn't they, in every way, escape not being other than one another?

They would escape it.

And yet whatever is not one does not partake of the very One. For then it would not be not-one, but would somehow be one.

True.

Nor, then, would whatever is not one be a number. For by having number they would in no way be not-one.

No, they wouldn't.

But what? Are the things that are not one pieces of the One? Or wouldn't then the things that are not one partake of the One?

They would partake.

So if, in every way, something is one and other things are not one,
147b then the One would neither be a piece of whatever is not one nor as a whole of pieces. Nor, in turn, could the things that are not one be pieces of the One, nor as wholes to the One as a piece.

No, they wouldn't.

And yet we said that whatever is neither pieces nor wholes nor other than one another will be the same as one another.

We did say this.

Shall we also say, then, that the One is this way in relation to the things that are not one: it is the same as them?

Let's say it.

The One, then, so it looks, is other than both the different things and itself and is the same as both them and itself.

I'm afraid this appears to be the case from this very speech.

c Then also both like and unlike both itself and the different things?

Perhaps.

Since, at any rate, it was shown to be other than the different things, surely the different things would also be other than it.

Why, how not?

And just as it's other than the different things, so too would the different things be other than it — neither more nor less?

Well, what then?

If, therefore, neither more nor less, in a like way.

Yes.

And so, insofar as it has experienced being other than the different things and the different things likewise than it, in this way the One would have experienced the same thing as the different things and the different things as the One.

d How do you mean this?

Like this: don't you assign each name to something?

I do.

What then? Could you say the same name many times or once?

I could.

Then if you say it once do you address whatever possesses the name, but if you said it many times you don't address this thing? Or, whether once or many times you utter the same name, doesn't a great necessity force you always to mean the same thing?

Why, how not?

Now is the 'other' a name for something?

Of course.

147e Whenever, then, you utter it — whether once or many times — you refer to nothing different nor name anything different than whatever in fact possessed the name.

Necessarily.

But whenever we say that the different things are other than the One or that the One is other than the different things we say the 'other' twice. Yet we always say it in reference to that nature which possessed the name.

Of course.

148a Insofar, therefore, as the One is other than the different things and the different things than the One, then, by having experienced the Other itself, the One would have had no different experience than the different things, but rather the same. But surely whatever has experienced the same thing is like: or not?

Yes.

Yet, insofar as the One has experienced being other than the different things, for this same reason everything would be like everything. For everything is other than everything.

It looks that way.

And yet the Like, at any rate, is opposed to the Unlike.

Yes.

And so too, the Other to the Same.

This too.

And, in addition, this was shown as well: that the One (it seems) is the same as the different things.

b Yes, it was shown.

But to be the same as the different things is quite the opposite experience of being other than the different things.

Of course.

Yet, insofar as other, it was revealed like.

Yes.

Insofar, then, as it's the same, it will be unlike, since it experiences the opposite of the experience that makes it like. For surely the Other made it like?

Yes.

The Same, therefore, will make it unlike, or it won't be opposed to the Other.

148c It looks that way.

Therefore the One will be like and unlike the different things: insofar as it's other, like; but insofar as the same, unlike.

Yes, it looks, in fact, as though the speech is of this sort.

And it's also like this —

What?

— Insofar as it has experienced the same thing, it hasn't experienced something different; but whatever hasn't experienced something different is not unlike; and whatever's not unlike is like. But insofar as it has experienced something different, it's different, and whatever's different is unlike.

That's the truth.

Since the One, then, is the same as the different things and since
d it's other, — as regards both and each — it would be both like and unlike the different things.

Of course.

And so likewise as regards itself: since, in fact, it was shown to be both other than itself and the same as itself, as regards both and each, will it be revealed both like and unlike?

Necessarily.

But what then? Look into what's the case concerning the One's touching and not touching itself and the different things.

I'm looking.

For surely the One itself was shown to be in itself as a whole.

Right.

And so too the One's also in the different things?

Yes.

Insofar, then, as it's in the different things, it would touch the
148e different things. But insofar as it's in itself, it would be kept from touching the different things and it would touch itself, since it's in itself.

It appears.

So clearly the One would touch itself and the different things.

It would touch.

But what about this? Mustn't everything that's going to touch something sit next to whatever it's going to touch, thereby occupying that seat which sits beside that of the thing it touches?

Necessarily.

And the One, then, if it's going to touch itself, must sit right next to itself, thereby occupying that place connected to the one it is in.

Yes, it must.

And so, as though two, the One would do this and would come
149a to be in two places at the same time. But as long as it is one, it won't be able to, will it?

No, it won't.

The same necessity, then, that makes the One not be two makes it not touch itself.

The same.

But neither will it, in fact, touch the different things.

Why's that?

Because, we say, whatever's going to touch, since it's a separate thing, must be next to whatever it's going to touch, and no third thing can be in the middle of them.

True.

There must be two things, then, at the very least, if there's going to be a touch.

There must.

But if to the two boundaries a third be added in succession, then
b they will be three, but the touches two.

Yes.

And so, clearly, whenever one thing is added, one touch is also added and the result is that the touches are one less than the number of the multitude. For by an amount equal to that by which the first two

exceeded the touches (by being more numerous than the touches), so every future number of things will also exceed all the touches. For in
149c the future whenever one is added to the number of things, one touch will also be added to the touches.

Right.

However many in number, then, are the beings, the touches are one less than they.

True.

But if, in fact, there is only one thing, and no dyad, there would be no touch.

How could there?

Now, we say that the things different than the One are neither one nor do they partake of it — if indeed they are different.

No, they don't.

There is, then, no number in the different things, since the One is not in them.

How could there be?

The different things, then, are not one nor two nor anything that
d has the name of a different number.

No.

The one alone, then, is one, and there could be no dyad.

It appears not.

There is, then, no touch, since there are no two things.

No, there isn't.

The One, therefore, does not touch the different things nor the different things the One, since, in fact, there is no touch.

No, they don't.

So, clearly, in accordance with all this, the One both touches and does not touch the different things and itself.

It looks that way.

Then is it both equal and unequal to both itself and the different things?

How?

If the One should be greater than the different things or less, or
e if, in turn, the different things should be greater or less than the One, then not by being one nor by being different than the One would the

One and the different things be at all greater or at all less than one another — that is, not by these, their very beinghoods —, would they? Instead, if, in addition to being of this sort, each should possess Equality, they would be equal to one another. But if the different things possessed Greatness and the One Smallness, or the One Greatness and the different things Smallness, then wouldn't whichever form Greatness was present in be greater, and wouldn't whichever Smallness was present in be less?

Necessarily.

And so are there, in fact, these two forms — Greatness and Smallness? For surely if there were not, they would not be opposed to one another and would not come to be present in the beings.

150a How could they?

If, then, Smallness became present in the One, it would be there either in the whole or in a part of it.

Necessarily.

But what if it should become present in the whole? Wouldn't it either have been stretched equally throughout the whole of the One, or surround it?

Obviously.

Then, should it be equal throughout, wouldn't Smallness be equal to the One itself; and, should it surround it, it'd be greater?

How not?

Then is it possible for Smallness to be equal to something or greater than something and so do the work of both Greatness and Equality and
b not its own work?

Impossible.

So Smallness could not be in the whole of the One; instead, if at all, it's in a part.

Yes.

But it cannot, in turn, be in an entire part, otherwise it will do the same things it did in respect to the whole: it will be equal or greater than whatever part it would ever be present in.

Necessarily.

Smallness, then, will never be present in any of the beings, since it cannot come to be therein either in a part or in a whole. And nothing will be small except Smallness itself.

It doesn't look like it.

Nor, then, will Greatness be present in anything. For then some-
150c thing different and separate from Greatness itself would be greater — namely, whatever Greatness is present in. And this even though there's no small in it, which it must by necessity exceed, if in fact it's great. But this is impossible, since Smallness is present nowhere.

True.

Furthermore Greatness itself is not greater than anything else than Smallness itself, nor is Smallness less than anything else than Greatness itself.

No, it's not.

The different things, then, are neither greater nor less than the One, since they partake of neither Greatness nor Smallness. Nor do
d these two have in relation to the One any power of exceeding or being exceeded, but only in relation to one another. Nor, again, could the One be greater or less than these two or the different things, since it partakes of neither Greatness nor Smallness.

It certainly appears not.

Then if the One is neither greater nor smaller than the different things, isn't it necessary for it neither to exceed nor be exceeded by them?

Necessarily.

Now, a great necessity makes whatever neither exceeds nor is exceeded be on equal terms, and it makes whatever is on equal terms equal.

How not?

e And, to be sure, the One itself is this way in relation to itself: since it possesses neither Greatness in itself nor Smallness, it could not be exceeded by nor exceed itself; instead, by being on equal terms it would be equal to itself.

Of course.

The One, then, would be equal to both itself and the different things.

It appears.

And yet since it is, in fact, in itself, it would also be around itself from without; and by surrounding itself it would be greater than itself,
151a but by being surrounded, less. And thus the one itself would be greater and less than itself.

It would.

Now, is this also necessary: that there is nothing outside the One

and the different things?

How not?

But surely whatever in fact *is* must always be somewhere?

Yes.

And so whatever is in something will be in the greater, since it's less? For otherwise one thing would not be in another.

No, it wouldn't.

But since there is nothing other separate from the different things and the One, and they must be in something, isn't it now necessary for them to be in one another — the different things in the One and the
151b One in the different things —, or else be nowhere?

It appears.

Because, then, the One is present in the different things, the different things would be greater than the One (since they surround it), and the One would be less than the different things (since it is surrounded). But because the different things are in the One, the One, according to this speech, would be greater than the different things and the different things less than the One.

It looks that way.

The One, then, is itself both equal to and greater and less than both itself and the different things.

It appears.

And, in addition, if in fact greater and less and equal, it would consist of equal and more and less measures than itself and the different
c things, and since of measures, also of parts.

How not?

Then by consisting of equal and more and less measures, in number it would be less and more than both itself and the different things and also equal to both itself and the different things in this same respect.

How?

Than whatever it is in fact greater than, it would surely consist of more measures — and as many as are the measures, so also the parts. And for whatever it is less than, likewise; and for whatever it is equal to, the same.

That's so.

And so, since it is greater and less and equal to itself, wouldn't it
d consist of equal and more and less measures as itself, since of the mea-

sures, so also of the parts?

How not?

Since, then, it consists of equal parts as itself it would be equal in multitude as itself; but since it consists of more parts, it would be more in number than itself; and since of less, less.

It appears.

And so won't the situation be the same for the One in relation to the different things? Since it appears greater than they, it is necessary that it also be more than they in number. But since it appears smaller, less; and since it appears equal in greatness, is it necessary that it also be equal in multitude with the different things?

It's necessary.

151e In turn, so it looks, the One itself will thus be equal and more and less in number than both itself and the different things.

It will be.

Does the One, then, also partake of time, and is it and does it become both younger and older than both itself and the different things and also neither younger nor older than itself or the different things, by so partaking of time?

How?

Surely *being* is in it, if in fact one *is*.

Yes.

But is *being* anything else than participation in beinghood along with the present time, just as the 'was' is a community with beinghood
152a along with the past, and, in turn, the 'will be' is such along with the future?

Yes, it is.

Then it partakes of time, if in fact it partakes of *being*.

Of course.

Now, of a time that's advancing?

Yes.

It always becomes older than itself, then, if it goes forward in time.

b Necessarily.

Do we remember that, while becoming younger, the older becomes older?

We remember.

And so, since the One becomes older than itself, would it become older than itself while it's becoming younger?

Necessarily.

So clearly it is becoming both younger and older than itself.

Yes.

But it is older, isn't it, whenever it is coming to be in the time now, the time between the 'was' and the 'will be'? For surely while advancing from the once to the hereafter it will not overstep the now.

No, it won't.

At that time, then, won't it hold off from becoming older, since it
152c has chanced upon the now, and it no longer becomes but already is, at that time, older? For while going forward it was never held fast by the now. For whatever goes forward is able to touch upon both of these — the now and the hereafter — this way: by letting go of the now and seizing the hereafter as it comes to be between them both, that is, the hereafter and the now.

True.

But unless, in fact, it's necessary for everything that becomes to circumvent the now, then whenever it's in it, it will always hold off
d from becoming and will be, at that time, whatever it chanced to be becoming.

It appears.

And the One, then, whenever by becoming older it chances upon the now, it holds off from becoming and is, at that time, older.

Of course.

And so, whatever it was becoming older than, of this it is older. But was it becoming older than itself?

Yes.

And the older is older than the younger?

It is.

And the One, then, is younger than itself at that time when, by becoming older, it chances upon the now.

Necessarily.

e But the now, surely, is always present in the One throughout all of its *being*. For it is always 'now' whenever in fact it *is*.

How not?

The One, then, always both is and becomes older and younger than itself.

It looks that way.

And is it or does it come to be for more time than itself, or for an equal time?

Equal.

And yet whatever becomes or is for an equal time has the same age.

How not?

But whatever has the same age is neither older nor younger.

No, it's not.

The One, then, since it both becomes and is for an equal time as itself, is and becomes neither younger nor older than itself.

It doesn't seem so to me.

But what? Than the different things?

I can't say.

153a Surely you can say this at least: that the things different from the One, if in fact they are others and not an other, are more than one. For whatever is an other would be one; but since they are others, they are more than one and would possess multitude.

Yes, they would possess it.

And whatever is a multitude would partake of a number more than one.

How not?

What then? Will we say that, of number, the more both come to be and have come to be first, or the less?

The less.

b The very least, then, is first: and this is the One. Isn't it now?

Yes.

Of all the things that have number, then, the One came to be first. But all the different things also possess number, if in fact they are different things and not a different thing.

Yes, they do possess it.

But, I believe, by coming to be first it came to be previously, and the different things later. But whatever things came to be later are younger than what came to be previously, and so the different things would be younger than the One, but the One would be older than the

different things.

Yes, it would be.

But what about this: could the One have come into being against
153c nature, against its own nature, or is that impossible?

Impossible.

Yet surely the One was shown to have parts, and, if parts, then also a beginning and end and middle.

Yes.

And so of all things — of both the One itself and each of the different things — does a beginning come into being first, and after the beginning all the different things until the end?

Why, how not?

And, in addition, we will say that all these things, the different things, are in fact pieces both of the whole and of one, and that it itself became both one and whole at the moment of the end.

Yes, we'll say this.

But I, at any rate, believe an end comes into being last of all, and
d the One, by nature, comes into being at the same time as this thing. So that, if it is in fact necessary for the One itself not to come into being against nature, then by having come into being at the same time as the end, it would by nature come into being last, after the different things.

It appears.

The One, then, is younger than the different things and the different things are older than the One.

So, in turn, it appears to me.

But what then? A beginning or any different part of the One or of any different thing, if indeed it is a part and not parts, isn't it necessary for it to be one, since it's a part?

Necessarily.

And so the One would come into being at the same time as the
e first thing that comes into being, and at the same time as the second, and it's not missing from any of the different things that come into being, since in fact it's added to any of them that comes to be one whole by reaching its extreme end. Neither from the middle nor from the first nor from the extreme end nor from any different thing in genesis is it missing.

True.

The One, then, maintains the same age as all the different things. So if the One hasn't grown, by nature, against nature, it would have come into being neither before nor after the different things, but at the
154a same time. And, according to this speech, the One would be neither older nor younger than the different things, nor the different things than the One. But, according to the previous one, it would be both older and younger, and the different things likewise than it.

Of course.

Clearly it is this way and has come to be this way. But what, in turn, about its becoming both older and younger than the different things and the different things than the One, and their becoming neither younger nor older? Just as it is for *being*, is it this way also for becoming, or is it other?

I can't say.

b Well I can say this: even if one thing is older than another, it could not become any older than by however much it differed in age when it first came into being; nor, in turn, should it be younger, it could not become any younger. For whenever equals be added to unequals, both in time and in anything else, they always make the difference equal to however much differed at first.

How not?

Being, then, could never become older or younger than the One
c that *is*, if in fact they always differed equally in age. For it is and has become older, and the other one younger — they are not coming to be so.

True.

And the One that *is*, then, never becomes either older or younger than the different things which *are*.

No, it doesn't.

But see if there's any way for them to become older or younger.

What way's that?

Inasmuch as the One was shown to be older than the different things and the different things than the One.

What then?

Whenever the One is older than the different things, surely it has come into being for more time than the different things.

d Yes.

Consider it again: if to more and to less time we shall add an equal amount of time, will the more differ from the less by an equal piece or

by a smaller one?

By a smaller one.

Then however much the One differed in age at first from the different things, there will also be this difference afterwards; but as it accrues time equally with the different things, it will always differ less in age from them than before. Or not?

Yes.

154e Now, whatever differs less in age in relation to something than before would become younger than before in relation to whatever previously it was older than?

Yes, younger.

But if it is becoming younger, aren't those different things, in turn, becoming older than before in relation to the One?

Of course.

Whatever had come to be younger, then, is becoming older in respect to whatever previously both had come to be and was older. But it never is older; instead, it is always becoming older than the other. For the latter advances towards the younger, and the former towards the
155a older. Likewise, in turn, the older is becoming younger than the younger. For as they go in opposite directions they are becoming opposites of one another: the younger is becoming older than the older and the older younger than the younger. But they cannot 'became.' For if they became, they would not still be becoming; rather, they'd be. But now they are becoming older than one another and younger: The One is becoming younger than the different things, since obviously it is older
b and came into being first; and the different things are becoming older than the One, since they came into being later. But according to the same speech, the different things also are this way in relation to the One, since, in fact, they are obviously older and came into being first.

Yes, it's obviously this way then.

And so, insofar as no one thing comes to be older than another or younger, because they always differ from one another by an equal number, then neither could the One become older than the different things or younger, nor the different things than the One. But insofar as — by an ever different piece — it is necessary for whatever came into being
c before to differ from what's later and whatever came into being later to differ from what's before, then for this very reason is it necessary for them to be becoming older and younger than one another, namely, the different things than the One and the One than the different things?

Of course.

So according to all of this, the One itself both is and becomes older and younger than both itself and the different things, and neither is nor becomes either older or younger than either itself or the different things.

Completely so.

But since the One partakes of time and of becoming both older
155d and younger, isn't it necessary for it also to partake of the once and the hereafter and the now — if in fact it partakes of time?

Necessarily.

The One then was and is and will be and was becoming and becomes and will become.

Why, how not?

And should there be anything to it and of it — this thing was and is and will be.

Of course.

And clearly there would be knowledge and opinion and perception of it, if in fact we are now doing all these things concerning it.

You're right!

And clearly there's a name and a definition for it, and it's named
e and spoken of, and whatever else of this sort chances to apply to the different things also applies to the One.

That's the case — completely.

Let's now speak yet a third time. The One, if it is as we have described it — isn't it necessary for it (since it is both one and many and being neither one nor many and partaking of time), since one *is*, sometimes to partake of beinghood, but since it *is* not, sometimes, in turn, not to partake of beinghood?[15]

Necessarily.

Then while it partakes will it be able, at that time, not to partake? Or when not partaking, to partake?

[15] What follows, up till 157b5, is sometimes treated by commentators as the third argument, thus bringing the total number of arguments up to nine. I do not take it to be a new arguement, since Parmenides does not repeat the basic hypothesis, something he does in all eight arguments, but rather he takes the One "as we have described it," sc. in argument two. This section, then, is probably an appendix to arguments one and two.

It won't be able.

At one time, then, it partakes and at a different time it does not partake: for this is the only way it could both partake and not partake of the same thing.

156a Right.

And so is there also the time when it comes to partake of *being* and when it lets go of it? Or how will it be able at one time to have and then not to have the same thing, unless it at one time takes and then releases it?

There's no way.

But surely you call coming to partake of beinghood becoming?

I do.

And isn't letting go of beinghood perishing?

Yes, of course.

The One, then, so it looks, by both taking and releasing beinghood, both comes to be and perishes.

b Necessarily.

But since it is one and many and coming to be and perishing, then whenever it becomes one, doesn't the 'being many' perish, and whenever it becomes many, doesn't the 'being one' perish?

Of course.

But in becoming one and many, isn't it necessary that it be both divided and collected?

Very much so.

In addition, whenever it becomes unlike and like, musn't it be made both unlike and like?

Yes.

And whenever it becomes greater and less and equal, mustn't it be both increased and diminished and made equal?

That's so.

c But whenever from being in motion it stands at rest, and whenever from standing at rest it changes to being in motion, surely it itself must not be in one place in time.

How's that?

If at first it stands at rest and later is in motion, and if at first it's in motion but later stands at rest, it won't be able to suffer such things without changing.

How could it?

But certainly there is no time at which something could at once neither be in motion nor stand at rest.

No, there isn't.

And yet it doesn't change without changing.

Not likely.

When, then, does it change? For it changes neither when it stands at rest nor when it's in motion nor when it is in time.

156d No, it doesn't.

Is there, then, this out-of-place thing that it would be in, at that time when it changes —

What sort of thing?

— The instant. For the 'instant' looks like it signifies this very thing: something from which there is a change in either of two directions. For while still standing at rest something cannot change from standing at rest; nor while still in motion can it change from motion. Instead this sort of momentary, out-of-place nature lurks between both
e motion and rest and is not in any time. Thus, into this and out of this, whatever's in motion changes to standing at rest and whatever stands at rest changes to being in motion.

I'm afraid so.

And the One, then, if in fact it both stands at rest and is in motion, would change from each of these two — for this way is the only way it could do both —, but changing it changes in an instant, and when it changes it would be in no time, nor would it at that time be in motion or stand at rest.

No, it wouldn't.

Then is it also this way in relation to the other changes? When-
157a ever from *being* to perishing it changes, or from *not-being* to becoming, doesn't it at that time come to be between both these motions and rests, and neither is at that time nor is not, neither becomes nor perishes?

It certainly looks that way.

According to this speech, then, when going from one to many and from many to one, it is neither one nor many, neither is it separated nor collected. And when going from like to unlike and from unlike to like, it's neither like nor unlike, neither is it made like nor unlike. And
b in going from small to great and to equal and vice-versa, it's neither small nor great nor equal, neither would it be increasing nor diminish-

ing nor being made equal.

It doesn't look like it.

So the One would suffer all these experiences, if it *is*.

How not?

What, properly, would the different things experience if one *is* — mustn't this be looked into?[16]

It must be looked into.

Shall we say, then, if one *is*, what the things different from the One must have experienced?

Let's say it.

Now if in fact they are different than the One, the different things are not the One. For otherwise they would not be different than the One.

157c Right.

However, neither are the different things entirely devoid of the One; instead, they partake of it in a way.

In what way?

Because surely the things different than the One are different since they have pieces. For if they should have no pieces, they would be completely one.

Right.

But pieces, we say, belong to whatever is a whole.

Yes, we say this.

And yet the very whole must be, by necessity, one thing made up of many things — this whole of which the pieces will be pieces. For each of the pieces must be a piece not of many but of a whole.

How's that?

If something should be a piece of many things, among which it's
d a member, surely it will be a piece of itself, which is impossible, and it will be a piece of each one of the different things, then, if in fact of all. For should it not be a piece of one, it will belong to the rest except this one, and so it will not be a piece of each one, and by not being a piece of each it will belong to none of the many. But should it belong to

[16] Parmenides now begins the third argument. His hypothesis is still that "one is," but now he describes the results for all the things different than the One, the "different things." The argument runs from 157b6 to 159b1.

none, it's impossible for it to belong — as a piece or as anything else — to all these things, of which it belongs to none at all.

That's certainly apparent.

The piece, then, is not a piece of the many nor of all things, but of
157e one certain idea, a certain one which we call 'whole': out of all things, it's the one that has come into being completely. Of this, the piece would be a piece.

Entirely so.

If, then, the different things have pieces, they would partake of both the Whole and one.

Of course.

Then the things different than the One necessarily are one complete whole that has pieces.

Necessarily.

And, in fact, the same explanation also holds for each piece: it
158a must, by necessity, partake of the One. For if each of them is a piece, then surely the 'each' signifies that it's one, when delineated from the rest, in itself — if in fact it will be 'each.'

Right.

But, to be sure, should it partake of the One, it'd make clear that it is different than one. For otherwise it wouldn't partake, but rather it would be one. But now it's clearly impossible for anything except the One itself to be one.

Impossible.

But it's necessary for both the Whole and the Piece to partake of the One. For the former will be one whole, of which the pieces are pieces; but each of the latter will be one piece of the Whole, in turn — as long as it's a piece of a whole.

That's so.

b And so the things partaking of the One will partake while being other than it?

How not?

But the things other than the One would surely be many. For if the things different than the One were neither one nor more than one, they would be nothing.

No, they wouldn't.

But since whatever partakes of the One as a piece and of the One

as a whole is more than one, isn't it now necessary for these things to be limitless in multitude, these very things which come to partake of the One?

How?

Let's see this way: does 'to come to partake' mean anything else than that they are not one nor do they partake of the One at that time when they are coming to partake?

That's clear.

158c And so they are multitudes in which the One isn't present?

Sure, multitudes.

What then? If we should be able to abstract, with our understanding, from such things the very least thing we could, isn't it necessary for this abstracted thing, since it would not partake of the One, also to be a multitude and not one?

Necessarily.

And so whenever we look into this other nature, in itself, of the form, however much of it as we can see at any one time, it will always be boundless in multitude?

Entirely so.

d And yet whenever each one piece becomes a piece, they already possess a limit in relation to one another and in relation to the whole, and the whole in relation to the parts.

Exactly so.

For the things different than the One, then, the result is that, from the One and from their being in community, so it looks, something other comes into being in themselves, something that provides a limit for them in relation to one another. But their nature, as far as they are concerned, is limitless.

It appears.

So clearly the things different than the One are limitless both as wholes and as concerns their parts and also partake of a limit.

Of course.

e And so they are both like and unlike both one another and themselves?

In what way?

Surely insofar as they are all limitless in respect to their own nature, this way they would have experienced the same thing.

Of course.

And, in addition, insofar as they all partake of a limit — this way, as well, they all would have experienced the same thing.

How not?

But insofar as they have experienced being both limited and limitless, they have suffered these experiences which are experiences most opposed to one another.

159a Yes.

But opposites are surely as unlike as possible.

Why, how not?

In the case of each single experience, then, they would be like both themselves and each other; but in the case of both experiences together they are both most opposed and unlike.

I'm afraid so.

So clearly the different things themselves would be both like and unlike both themselves and each other.

That's so.

And they're the same as and other than one another, and are in motion and stand at rest — and with no difficulty we will find that the things different than the One suffer all those opposite experiences, since,
b in fact, they obviously have experienced these ones.

You're right.

And so, if we dismiss these things as already apparent, let us inquire once again if one *is*, are the things different from the One only this way or not?[17]

Of course.

So let's say from the beginning if one *is*, what the things different from the One must have experienced.

Yes, let's say it.

Isn't the One separate from the different things, and the different

[17] This argument, the fourth, extends from 159b2 to 160b1. Like the third, the hypothesis is that "one is," and the results are shown for the "different things." But all the results of this argument contradict those of the third. The relation of the two is similar to that of the first and second arguments. The reader should note that, of the first four arguments, the fourth is the shortest, just as the eight is the shortest of the last four.

things from the One?

Why's that?

Because surely there's nothing other besides them — something different than the One yet different than the different things. For every-
159c thing is spoken of when one says, 'Both the One and the different things.'

Yes, everything.

Then there's nothing other than these, in which the One and the different things could *be*, as if in the same thing.

No, there isn't.

So the One and the different things are never in the same thing.

It doesn't look like it.

They're separate then?

Yes.

Nor do we say that the One, in the true sense, has pieces.

How could it?

d The One, then, would not be in the different things as a whole nor would pieces of it, if it both is separate from the different things and has no pieces.

How could it?

In no way, then, would the different things partake of the One, since they partake of it neither by any piece nor as a whole.

It doesn't look like it.

In no way, then, are the different things one, nor do they have any one in themselves.

No, they don't.

So neither are the different things many: for each one of them would be a piece of the whole, if they were many. But now the things different than the One are neither one nor many nor whole nor pieces, since in no way do they partake of it.

Right.

Then the different things themselves are not two or three nor are these things present in them, if in fact they are in every way devoid of
e the One.

That's so.

And, then, the different things themselves are not like and are not unlike the One, nor is Likeness and Unlikeness present in them. For if

they should be like and unlike or should possess Likeness and Unlikeness in themselves, surely the things different than the One would possess in themselves two forms opposed to one another.

It appears.

But it would be impossible, at any rate, for whatever does not partake of one to partake of any two.

Impossible.

The different things, then, are neither like nor unlike nor both.
160a For should they be like or unlike, they would partake of one or the other form; and should they be both, they would partake of two opposed forms. And this is obviously impossible.

True.

Then they're also not the same or other, nor in motion or standing at rest, nor becoming or perishing, nor greater or less or equal, nor have they experienced anything else of such things. For if the different things submit to having experienced any such thing, they will partake of one and two and three and odd and even — things it's obviously
b impossible for them to partake of, since they're devoid of the One in every way whatsoever.

Most true.

So, clearly, if one *is*, the one both is all things and is not even one thing both in relation to itself and likewise in relation to the different things.[18]

Completely so.

So be it. After this mustn't we look into what must result if, in fact, the One *is* not?[19]

Yes, we must look into it.

[18] In this one line Parmenides succinctly states the results of the preceding four arguments. Arguments one and three show that, if one is, it is nothing. (Argument three makes this point indirectly. If the things different than the One experience everything, then, to be different than them, mustn't the One experience nothing?) Arguments two and four, likewise, show that, if One is, it is everything. The major theme is constant, "one is," but the variations on that theme result in complete contradiction. Compare his summary here to the one that follows the final 'movement' of the piece (166c2-6).

[19] Parmenides now changes the basic hypothesis from "one is" to "the One is not." With this change he begins the fifth argument, which runs from 160b5 to 163b6. In this argument he deduces the results of this hypothesis for the One itself.

What sort of thing, then, would this hypothesis — 'if one *is* not' — be? Does it differ at all from this one: 'if not-one *is* not?'

Sure it differs.

160c Does it only differ, or is to say 'if not-one *is* not' the total opposite of 'if one *is* not?'

The total opposite.

But what if someone should say 'if Greatness *is* not' or 'Smallness *is* not' or anything else of that sort, then wouldn't he in each case make clear that he means that whatever *is* not is something other?

Of course.

And so also now he would make clear that he means that whatever *is* not is other than the different things, whenever he says, 'if one *is* not.' And do we understand what he means?

We understand.

Therefore he first means something known and then something other than the different things, whenever he says 'one,' whether he
d adds *being* or *not-being* to it. For whatever is said not to *be* is nonetheless known, and it is known to differ from the different things. Or not?

Necessarily.

In this way, then, we must say from the beginning, if one *is* not, what must be. First of all this must, so it looks, be the case concerning it: there is knowledge of it. Otherwise there'd be no way to know what is said whenever someone says, 'If one *is* not.'

True.

And so mustn't the different things also be other than it, or else it wouldn't be said to be other than the different things?

Of course.

And so otherness, in addition to knowledge, belongs to it. For
e whenever someone says that the One is other than the different things, he doesn't mean that otherness belongs to the different things, but rather to it.

It appears.

In addition the One that is not partakes of the 'of that' and the 'of something' and the 'of this' and the 'to this' and the 'of these' and of all such things. For the One could not be spoken of nor could anything be said to be other than the One, nor could anything be or be said to be to it or of it, unless it had a share in the 'of something' or of these different things.

Right.

So it's not possible for the One to *be*, since it really *is* not, but in no way is it prohibited from partaking of many things; in fact, it's nec-
161a essary for it to do this, if indeed that One and not something different *is* not. However, if neither the One nor the 'that' will not *be*, then the speech is about something different and nothing can be uttered. But if that One and nothing else is hypothesized not to *be*, then it's necessary for it to have a share in the 'that' and many different things.

Yes, of course.

Then it also possesses Unlikeness in relation to the different things. For should the things different than the One be other, they would be of another sort.

Yes.

But aren't things of another sort of a different sort?

How not?

But aren't things of a different sort unlike?

b Yes, unlike.

And so if in fact they are unlike the One, it's clear that the unlike things would be unlike something unlike them.

Clearly.

So the One would possess Unlikeness, in respect to which the different things are unlike it.

It looks that way.

But if being unlike the different things belongs to it, isn't it necessary that being like itself belong to it?

How?

If being unlike one belongs to the One, surely the speech would not concern something like the One, nor would the hypothesis be about the One, but rather about something different than one.

Of course.

c But certainly this can't be.

Certainly not.

Therefore being like the One, itself, must belong to it.

It must.

And, in addition, it is not, in turn, equal to the different things. For if it should be equal, it would already *be* and be like them by this

equality. And both of these things are impossible, if indeed one *is* not.

Yes, impossible.

And since it is not equal to the different things, isn't it also necessary for the different things not to be equal to it?

Necessarily.

But aren't things not equal unequal?

Yes.

But aren't unequals unequal to something unequal to them?

How not?

And so the One partakes of Inequality, in respect to which the
160d different things are unequal to it?

It does partake.

But surely both Greatness and Smallness belong to Inequality.

Yes, they do.

There's both Greatness and Smallness, then, in a one of this sort?

I'm afraid so.

Surely Greatness and Smallness are always most removed from one another.

Of course.

Then there's always something between them.

There is.

Can you say, then, anything else that's between them except Equality?

No, only this.

Whatever, then, possesses Greatness and Smallness, also possesses Equality, since it's between these two.

e It appears.

The One that is not, so it looks, would have a share of Equality and Greatness and Smallness.

It looks that way.

And yet it must also, in a way, partake of beinghood.

How's that?

It must *be* in the state that we've been speaking of: for if it's not in this state, we would not be speaking truly when we say that the One *is* not. But if we are speaking truly, it is clear that we are saying the very

things that *are*. Or is it not so?

Yes, that's so.

But since we claim to speak truly, it's necessary for us also to claim
162a to speak the things that *are*.

Necessarily.

So it looks, then, as though the One that *is* not, *is*. For if it's not to be something that *is* not, and instead will somehow let go of *being* in order to give way to *not-being*, straight away it will be something that *is*.

Entirely so.

It must, therefore, possess, as a restraint on its *not-being*, *being* something that *is* not, — if it's going not to *be*. In the same way Being must possess Non-being as its *not-being*, so that it may, in turn, *be* completely. For in this way Being would most of all *be* and Non-being would most of all not *be*. For Being will partake of the beinghood of *being* something that *is*, but will not partake of the beinghood of *being* some-
b thing that *is* not, if it's going to *be* completely. And Non-being will not partake of the beinghood of *not-being* something that *is* not, but will partake of the beinghood of *being* something that *is* not, if Non-being, in turn, also will completely not *be*.

Most true!

And so, since in fact Being has a share in *not-being* and Non-being in *being*, then the One, since it *is* not, must, by necessity, have a share in *being* in order not to *be*.

Necessarily.

And so the One appears to possess beinghood, if it *is* not.

It appears.

Also, then, no beinghood, since, in fact, it *is* not.

How not?

Well, is something that's a certain way able not to be that way, while not changing from that state?

No, it's not able to.

c So whenever something both is and then is not a certain way, it always signifies a change.

How not?

But change is a motion. Or what will we say?

A motion.

Now, the One obviously both *is* and *is* not?

Yes.

Then obviously it is one way and then not this way.

It looks like it.

And the non-being which is one, therefore, has been shown to move, since it has a change from *being* to *not-being*.

I'm afraid so.

And yet if it's nowhere among the beings — as, in fact, it isn't, since it *is* not —, then it would not withdraw from somewhere to somewhere else.

How would it?

162d It wouldn't move, then, by changing place, at any rate.

No, it wouldn't.

Nor, indeed, would it turn about in the same thing: for it nowhere touches upon the same thing. For 'the same thing' is something that *is*, and it's impossible for what *is* not to be in one of the things that *are*.

Yes, impossible.

The One that *is* not, then, couldn't turn about in some place that it's not in.

No, it couldn't.

Nor, indeed, can the One change from itself, whether it *is* or *is* not. For then the speech would not still be about the One — if in fact it changed from itself — but rather about something different.

Right.

But if it neither changes nor turns about in the same place nor changes place, would it somehow still be in motion?

e How could it?

But whatever's motionless necessarily is at peace, and whatever's at peace necessarily stands at rest.

Necessarily.

The One that in no way *is*, then, so it looks, both stands at rest and is in motion.

It looks that way.

And yet if indeed it is in motion, a great necessity forces it to
163a change. For in whatever way it be moved, in this respect it no longer is as it was, but is otherwise.

That's so.

So by moving the One also changes.

Yes.

And yet by not moving in any way it in no way changes.

No, it doesn't.

Insofar, then, as the non-being that's one is in motion, it changes; but insofar as it's not in motion, it doesn't change.

No, it doesn't.

The One that is not, then, both changes and does not change.

It appears.

But isn't it necessary for whatever changes to become other than
163b it was before, and to perish from its previous state? But what does not change mustn't come to be nor perish?

Necessarily.

And the One that is not, then, by changing, both comes to be and perishes; but, by not changing, it neither comes to be nor perishes. And so the One that is not both comes to be and perishes and neither comes to be nor perishes.

No, it certainly doesn't.

Once more let's go back again to the beginning to see whether these things appear to us as they do now, or otherwise.

Well, we must.

c And so if one *is* not, we'll say what the result concerning it must be?[20]

Yes.

But whenever we say '*is* not,' does it signify anything else than a deprivation of beinghood for whatever we say *is* not?

Nothing else.

Then whenever we say something *is* not, do we mean that it *is* not one way but *is* another? Or does this '*is* not,' once uttered, simply sig-

[20] This is the beginning of the sixth argument, which, like the fifth, treats of the hypothesis "one *is* not." Similarly, like the fifth, second and first arguments, the sixth deduces the results of this hypothesis for the One itself. It goes from 163b7 to 164b4. As you may expect, from your experience of arguments two and four, this argument contradicts the preceeding one in its entirety.

nify that whatever *is* not — no way, no how — *is*, nor in any way partakes of beinghood?

Most simply — that's it.

Then whatever *is* not could neither *be* nor partake of beinghood in any different way.

163d No, it couldn't.

But would becoming and perishing be anything else than, for the former, to come to partake of beinghood, or, for the latter, to lose beinghood?

Nothing else.

But whatever has no share in something would neither take hold of it nor lose it.

How could it?

The One, then, since it in no way *is*, must not possess nor give up nor come to partake in beinghood in any way.

That's likely.

So the non-being that's one neither perishes nor comes to be, since in no way does it partake of beinghood.

It appears not.

e Nor, then, does it change at all: for it would then both come to be and perish, should it suffer this.

True.

But if it doesn't change, isn't it necessary that it not be in motion?

Necessarily.

Nor, indeed, will we say that what in no way *is* stands at rest. For whatever stands at rest must always be in the same place.

The same, how not?

So, in turn, whatever *is* not, we shall say, never stands at rest nor is in motion.

No, not at all.

164a In addition, it does not possess any of the beings; for whenever it partakes of a certain being, it would partake of beinghood.

Clearly.

Nor, then, does it possess Greatness nor Smallness nor Equality.

No, it doesn't.

Nor, indeed, would it possess Likeness or Otherness either in relation to itself or in relation to the different things.

It appears not.

But what? How could the different things relate to it, if nothing must relate to it?

They cannot.

The different things, then, are neither like nor unlike nor the same as nor other than it.

No, they aren't.

But what? Will there be the 'of that' or the 'to that' or the 'something' or the 'this' or the 'of this' or 'of a different thing' or 'to a different thing' or 'once' or 'hereafter' or 'now' or knowledge or opin-
164b ion or perception or definition or name or anything else of the things that *are* concerning the thing that *is* not?

No, there won't.

So, then, one that *is* not somehow is in no state at all.

It certainly looks as though it is in no state at all.

So let's say once again, if one *is* not, what the different things must have experienced.[21]

Yes, let's say it.

Well surely they must *be*: for if the different things were not, nothing could be said about the different things.

That's so.

But if this speech is about the different things, these different things are other. Or don't you assign the 'different' and the 'other' to the same thing?

c I do.

But doubtless we claim that the other is other than another and the different is different than something different?

Yes.

And for the different things, then, if they're going to be different, there is something they are different from.

Necessarily.

But what could it be? For they won't be different than the One, since it *is* not.

[21] We now begin the seventh argument. The hypothesis is still that "one *is* not," but here we deduce the results for the "different things." The argument extends from 164b5 to 165e1.

No, they won't.

They're different than one another, then. For this is all that's left to them, or else they're different than nothing.

Right.

Then they're all different from one another in multitude; for they could not be so one by one, since one *is* not. Instead each heap of
164d them, so it looks, is limitless in multitude. For even if someone shall grasp what seems to be the smallest thing, just like a dream in sleep there appears instantaneously a many in the place of what seemed to be one, and in the place of the smallest thing there appears something very great in relation to anything chopped off from it.

Absolutely right.

So, if there be heaps of this sort, the different things would be different than one another — if one *is* not but different things *are*.

Exactly so.

And so will there be many heaps, each appearing to be one but not really being so, if in fact there'll *be* no one?

That's so.

And number will seem to belong to them, if in fact each seems to
e be one while they are many.

Of course.

And so some will appear to be odd and others even — but they won't be so in truth, if in fact there'll *be* no one.

No, they won't be so.

In addition, we claim, there will seem to be a smallest thing present among them; but this appears many and great in relation to each of the
165a many apparently small things that there are.

How not?

And, to be sure, each heap will be thought to be equal to the many small things. For it would pass from greater to less, it appears, before seeming to enter into the middle — but this would be an appearance of equality.

That's likely.

And so, while having a limit in relation to a different heap, does it have in relation to itself neither beginning nor limit nor middle?

Why's that?

Because whenever someone, by his understanding, takes hold of one of these things as belonging to such heaps, then a different begin-

165b ning will always appear before the beginning, and another end will be left over after the end, and in the middle there'll be different middles more middle than the middle — but smaller, since we can't grasp each one of them because the One *is* not.

Most true.

So I believe that anything that is, whatever someone grasps with his understanding, necessarily is smashed into chopped-up bits. For surely, without one, he would always grasp a heap.

Of course.

c And so to anyone seeing such a thing from afar and faintly, won't it necessarily appear to be one? But to someone thinking about it up close and sharply, doesn't each one appear limitless in multitude, if in fact it's devoid of the One that *is* not?

Yes, that's most necessary.

So, then, each of the different things must appear to be both limitless and having limit and one and many, if one *is* not but the things different from the One *are*.

They must.

And so will they also seem to be both like and unlike?

How's that?

Just as to someone standing far from a drawing, everything there, appearing to be one, appears to have experienced the same situation and to be alike —

Of course.

d — But when he comes closer they appear many and other and, by the appearance of the Other, of another sort and unlike themselves.

That's so.

And so it's necessary for these very heaps to appear both like and unlike themselves and one another.

Of course.

And so also the same and other as one another, and touching and separate from themselves, and moving in every motion and standing altogether at rest, and becoming and perishing and neither, and surely every sort of thing that we can easily describe, if, without there being
e one, many *is*.

Yes, most true.

Going back once more to the beginning, let's say, if one *is* not, but the things different than the One *are*, what must be.[22]

Let's say it then.

Now the different things won't be one.

How could they?

Nor, then, many: for one would also be present in beings that are many. For if one is not in these things at all, then they're all no-thing, so that they would not even be many.

True.

But should one not be present in the different things, the different things are neither many nor one.

No, they aren't.

166a Nor do they appear one or many.

Why's that?

Because the different things have no community — no way, no how — with any of the things that *are* not; nor do any of the things that *are* not relate to any of the different things. For the things that *are* not have no part.

True.

Then there would be no opinion about anything that *is* not among the different things, nor any appearance, and — no way, no how — whatever *is* not is not opined by the different things.

No, it isn't.

If one, then, *is* not, none of the different things are opined to be
b one or many: for without one it's impossible to opine 'many.'

Yes, impossible.

If one, then, *is* not, the different things neither are nor are opined to be one or many.

It doesn't look like it.

Then not like or unlike.

No.

[22] This argument, number eight, is the shortest of them all, running only from 165e2 to 166c2. Like number seven, it assumes that "one is not," and it deduces the results for the different things, but it comes to a completely opposed conclusion. With this final point and counter-point of contradiction, Parmenides' song is complete.

And not, surely, the same or other, nor touching nor separate, nor anything else that before we described them as appearing to be. The different things neither are nor appear to be any of these, if one *is* not.

True.

166c And so, if we should say in short, "If one *is* not, nothing *is*," would we speak rightly?

Entirely so.

Let this be said, then, and also that, so it looks, whether one *is* or *is* not, both it and the different things, both in relation to themselves and in relation to each other, all, in all ways, both *are* and *are* not and both appear and do not appear.[23]

Most true.

[23] Compare this summary, one that encompasses all eight arguments, with the one that capped the fourth argument (160b2-5). In this final summation the gracious Parmenides gives equal prominence to the "different things," that is, the negation of the One. Likewise, he put appearance on par with being. This majestic finalé thus encompasses the whole, "all, in all ways."